

**BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW PANEL**

MEETING MINUTES

Date: June 5, 2008

Meeting No: 82

Project: Saratoga Street Residential and Automated Garage

Phase: Final

Location: Unit Block West Saratoga Street

PRESENTATION:

Peter Fillat, Architect for the project, presented a revised proposal for this mixed-use project consisting of an automated parking garage and 22 residential units. Relocating mechanical spaces, previously on the ground level, to the basement has resulted in increasing the capacity of the garage, since presented to the Panel last year, from 224 to 402 vehicles. The height of both the garage and the residential component remain, as previously shown, at eighty (80) feet above mean grade of the site. This accepted interpretation of measurement of height allows portions of the project to be higher than 80' above the grade directly below. The top floor of the residential portion is set back from Saratoga Street and between the Rectory and the garage. The garage exterior consists of solid light colored panels with some articulations in contrast to the glass and metal character of the residential portion that is also characterized by an elegant sun screen.

Robert Johnson, Landscape Architect, outlined the landscape treatment for the project which includes a garden at both the podium level and a garden on the roof top level of the residential portion. A degree of screening is developed between the project and the Rectory.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL:

1. The residential entry on Saratoga Street should be strengthened. The adjacent garage entry appears ill placed and consideration should be given to relocating this entry to Pleasant Street.
2. The garden on the podium level merits further development.
3. The increase to 402 spaces in the parking garage is of concern to the Panel and it suggests that this may create a negative impact on traffic on Saratoga Street and in the immediate area. This is a critical issue as it appears that additional garage development may be expected in this area, thereby compounding the problem in the future.

Community representatives included Messrs. Robb Ross Hendrickson, Seann Malloy, Matthew Kimball, President of Preservation Maryland, Johns Hopkins, Baltimore Heritage, Frank Gant, Architect, and Katrina Dennis, among others. All the above voiced strong opposition to the project, both verbally and in written form. David Hillman, developer, responded to the criticism.

In summation, although the Panel was pleased with the architectural development of the project, but there is no question that many Panel members share some of the community concerns about the appropriateness of this scale project on this site. The increase to 402 cars seems too great and must be evaluated in the pending Traffic Impact Study. It would appear that a project with a lesser number of cars could lower the building height, to perhaps sixty (60) feet, and gain a modicum of acceptance by the interested community representatives.

PANEL ACTION:

Final not approved at this time.

Prior to the next presentation, applicants must present the project to the Department of Planning's Site Plan Review Committee. At a next presentation, a response to the comments relative to the garage entry and to the residential units is required as well as larger scale details of the exterior treatments of the garage and residential units. The Panel would like to see any ventilation/louver units that are within the elevations as well. In addition, outstanding landscape issues, signage and lighting as required in a final presentation.

The Panel appreciates the efforts of the Architect and his developer to strive to increase the quality of this project, but it urges all parties, including City agencies to work towards decreasing the height of the project through a reduction in parking capacity and thereby gain greater Community support.

Attending:

David Hillman, Amanda Heichelbech, Richard Hillman – Southern Management Corporation

Peter Fillat - Peter Fillat Architects Inc;

Robert Johnson, Andrew Durham – Daft McCune Walker

Courtney Capute – Venable

The Rev. Mark Stanley – Old Saint Paul's

Rob Ross Hendrickson – 309 Cathedral Street

Matthew L. Kimball – Preservation Maryland

Seann Malloy, Alex Shubin – 330 Associates

Katrina Davis – Kramon&Graham

Johns Hopkins – Baltimore Heritage

Frank Gant – GBA Architects

Ed Gunts – The Sun

Jay Brodie – BDC

Messrs. Ramberg, Britt, Cameron and Schack – Panel
Doug McCoach, Bob Quilter – Planning Department